

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-11, and 14-24 are pending in the application, with Claims 1 and 5 being independent. Claims 17-20 have been amended. Claims 21-24 are newly presented. No new matter has been added.

Claims 19-20 were objected to due to the recitation that perforations are in a straight line. Applicant notes that the basis for these claims is not the embodiment shown in Figure 2. Rather, Claims 19 and 20 are directed to the embodiment shown in Figures 8-11. Applicant submits that the perforations respectively recited in these two claims can therefore be in straight lines. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-2, 4, 15, 17, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over McLeod (EP 0 355 422 A) in view of Nakaya (JP 09-263075 A). Claims 5-6, 8, 16, 18, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over McLeod in view of Skees (EP 0 726 164 A2) and Nakamura (JP 07-061170 A). Claims 9-11 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over McLeod in view of Skees and Nakamura, and further in view of Hirano et al. (JP 10-006594 A). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In the Office Action, the position is taken that it is appropriate to combine McLeod and Nakaya. Applicant submits, however, that even though both references may teach printing papers, a person of ordinary skill in the art would not have easily combined the references.

Applicant respectfully submits that Nakaya does not teach or suggest the meritorious effects, beyond “aesthetic design” as stated in the Office Action, that can be obtained by making four corners of a card into a round shape. For example, the present invention solves a problem described at page 6, line 25 - page 7, line 3 of the original specification that a print having four squarish corner edges is hard to put into a holder because an edge of the print strikes the holder or is caught thereby upon putting the print into the holder. Nakaya does not teach or suggest that in order to solve such a problem, four corners of a card should be made into a round shape.

Further, as noted in the Amendment filed January 23, 2004, the relationship between the “center portion” and “outside portions” of Nakaya is distinct from that of McLeod. Applicant submits that because of the distinction, there is very slight, if any, motivation to combine Nakaya and McLeod. One of ordinary skill would not choose a part of the structure of Nakaya that is not a characteristic feature of the invention according to Nakaya, and apply it to McLeod, merely because printing papers happen to be disclosed in each.

In the Office Action, it is conceded that Nakaya and McLeod have different reasons for creating their respective outside portions. Applicant submits that, in view of this, and further in view of the observation that the corners shown in the invention of Nakaya are not a characteristic feature of that invention, one of ordinary skill in the art would not easily have arrived at the idea of applying Nakaya to McLeod merely due to a perception of aesthetic value. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection over McLeod and Nakaya be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Skees is cited for teaching rounded corners in an inner portion 36 of a printed sheet 26. The motivation to apply the rounded corners of Skees to McLeod is also said to be one of aesthetic design.

Applicant submits that the rounded corners of the invention of Skees are not a characteristic feature of that invention, and that one of ordinary skill in the art would not easily have arrived at the idea of applying Skees to McLeod merely for perceived aesthetic value.

Skees does not teach or suggest that rounded corners can be employed in response to problems that can be solved by the present invention. Further, the relationship between the “center portion” and “outside portions” of Skees is quite distinct from that of McLeod.

Nakamura is cited for its disclosure of a card 74 that can be applied as a label. Applicant submits that the relationship between the “center portion” and “outside portions” of Nakamura is also quite distinct from that of McLeod, and that at least for this reason, there would not have been motivation to apply Nakamura to McLeod, any decorative purposes notwithstanding, in a response to problems that can be solved by the present invention.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection over McLeod, Skees, and Nakamura be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Applicant submits that Hirano et al. does not compensate for the deficiencies of McLeod with respect to the claimed invention. Moreover, since one of ordinary skill in the art would not easily have thought to combine McLeod, Skees, and Nakamura, a hypothetical addition of Hirano et al. is respectfully submitted to be moot. The rejection over McLeod, Skees, Nakamura, and Hirano et al. is requested to be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Applicant submits that the independent claims patentably distinguish the invention over the cited art. The dependent claims, including newly-presented Claims 21-24, are also submitted to be patentable, due to their dependency upon allowable base claims, and further due to additionally recited features. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and early passage to issue of the application are respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in Washington, D.C. by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to the address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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